

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
AUGUST 21, 1997

PROJECTS REVIEWED

Holly Park Community Facilities
University Townhouses
Seattle Public Utilities Irrigation Program
Pike Street Improvement Project, Phase 1
Sidewalk and Related Storm Drainage SLI

Convened: 8:00 AM

Adjourned: 3:00 PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Barbara Swift, Chair
Robert Foley
Rick Sundberg

STAFF PRESENT

Marcia Wagoner
Peter Aylsworth
Vanessa Murdock

082197.1 Project: **HOLLY PARK COMMUNITY FACILITIES**
 Phase: Schematics
 Presenters: Stephen Antupit, Office of Management and Planning
 Stan Lokting, ARC Architects
 Melanie Davies, Swift & Company
 Mayumi Tsutakawa, artist
 Time: 45 min. (0.3%)

In response to previous Commission comments and suggestions, the design team has concentrated on developing the south elevation of the Family Center and the outdoor plaza or community common area. The asymmetry of the south elevation has been emphasized and the exterior treatment changed to better match the Campus of Learners. The vocabulary of the masonry base with metal above was repeated on the Family Center and serves to visually connect the two buildings. A series of stepped windows, which replace the previous bowed windows, are easier to deal with functionally and better identify the large interior volume. As requested by the Commission, it has been recommended to the client that the second vehicular entrance to the small parking be removed.

The opportunities for art in the community facilities have been prioritized in the following locational hierarchy:

1. Poetry Garden and Community Commons Area
2. Family Center Lobby; Floor treatment
3. Family Center Children's Areas; Lobby and Portal Entrances to Child Care areas
4. Community Mural in Family Center Lobby
5. Festival Canopy in Community Commons Plaza
6. Canopy Treatment/Fascia; Building Canopies at entrances and around major features of the building.

The community common area is shaped by curving steps which are a focal point of the space but are also oriented toward the blank wall of the Campus of Learners. This wall will be used as a background for a temporary stage during community festivals and activities. It can also be utilized for movie projection and other community gatherings.

Discussion:

Sundberg: This project has really come a long way since the last presentation. There is a nice contrast between the poetry garden and the main courtyard. I like the fundamental differences between these two outdoor rooms and hope you work a little more with it. The south elevation has really improved, but I am somewhat concerned with the formal quality of the 1st floor bay windows. Perhaps making the canopy asymmetrical on top of the windows, or shifting the elements might help. Taking advantage of that interior volume has really enhanced the elevation.

Antupit: Perhaps interior treatment of the three entrances on the 1st floor of the south elevation could be expressed somehow on the exterior, helping to set them apart.

- Lokting:** We are using three different, strong colors on the inside and could possibly introduce those around the three exterior entrances, thereby expressing the interior vocabulary to accent the major points of entry.
- Sundberg:** I like the stepping of the windows, but suggest that the shapes be limited in order to ensure quality craftsmanship, rather than extending the low-bid process into shapes that will be less satisfying after completion.
- Foley:** I appreciate your bringing the model, it really shows some of the subtleties of the spatial development. Given the program, this site is extremely challenging. The way one enters the buildings is interesting to me. I like the way the buildings and the landscape combine to form defined spaces with soft edges. Forcing people to travel through the outdoor spaces toward a common point where both primary entrances can be found. Is the trellis still proposed at the south side of the poetry garden?
- Tsutakawa:** Yes, the trellis is still proposed at the south edge.
- Foley:** I think that is helpful in ending the space without a real hard edge. I am really impressed with the way the spaces have developed. The idea of the blank wall being used for festivals, movie projection, etc. is wonderful. It will greatly enhance community interaction.
- Wagoner:** The lack of storage has resulted in cluttered, unusable space in other community centers. Have you thought about the storage of various temporary canopies, screens, etc.?
- Lokting:** We have a very long storage room in the Family Center for those items.
- Foley:** Am I correct in assuming that the large tree in the center of the complex is existing?
- Davies:** Yes, it is. There is actually much more volume to it than shown in the model.
- Antupit:** I would like some guidance from the Commission on the intersection of Myrtle and 32nd. There will be new large bus shelters, new ½ signal, ADA accessible ramp to the park. Given that there are opportunities identified for the arts program in this area, how much of them should be directly related to or distinguished from the community facilities area? Should there be a common vocabulary between the two or are they different projects?
- Foley:** My sense is that the street should try to respond to the street environment and the entrance to Holly Park. It should have a larger context associated with the surrounding neighborhoods and the park, rather than just with the community facilities. The focus should be more on the Holly Park entrance.
- Sundberg:** It could have some echoes of the community facility vocabulary since it serves as an entrance to the neighborhood community, but it should have a larger contextual focus.
- Swift:** There is a different scale at the intersection than at the community facilities. Perhaps a connective feature could be way-finding elements. I know there are some budget issues with the expense.
- Wagoner:** The way-finding system in the Holly Park area could be an incredible project with some real arts potential.
- Antupit:** The caution would be not to overemphasize them, but let them blend into the community.

Swift: My impression was that the community facility was sort of a book end to the park, school, RTA; part of that larger context.

Antupit: Yes, that's right.

Sundberg: The standards of the Holly Park project are very high, and I am very pleased with the development of the community area.

ACTION: **The subcommittee recommends that the Commission approve the plan as presented and appreciates the sincere response to previous comments and suggestions of the Commission.**

082197.2 Project: **UNIVERSITY TOWNHOUSES**
 Phase: Schematics
 Presenters: Earl Edwards, Department of Housing and Human Services
 Charlie Vos, Sortun Vos Architects
 Time: 30 min. (hourly)

The University Congregational Church, located at 15th and 45th Avenues, desires to fund a low income, family housing project on an existing parking lot across the street from the church. The proposed building includes 14 units, flats on the first floor with 2 story townhouses above, as well as maintaining the current number of parking spaces in a below grade lot. Parking for the housing units as well as handicapped parking and access is located on the alley side of the building. The building is arranged around a central courtyard. The courtyard is currently not funded and therefore, not fully designed. The exterior of the building has vinyl siding with stone tiling at the base around the courtyard and a color band below the 2nd floor. The design team is requesting departures in building modulation, building width, and parking not accessed from the alley. The project is finishing its Design Review phase.

Discussion:

Swift: It appears that you are using a smaller Hawthorne tree for the street trees and a Mt. Fuji Cherry for the back alley trees, is that correct?

Vos: That is correct.

Swift: There is a scaling issue in the courtyard that a tree could alleviate while being supported by the structure in the garage. Are there structural supports in the garage that could be used to support a tree in the courtyard?

Vos: There is a line of columns under the courtyard. The Design Review Board suggested shrinking the courtyard to allow for private spaces behind each unit, but we have tried to keep it as large as possible.

Foley: Since there is no budget for a play structure, perhaps there is some way of providing play opportunities that don't require the placement of a structure.

Vos: Trying to design around the courtyard has been difficult and frustrating, since there isn't any money in the budget for its contents.

Swift: There are no dollars budgeted for the courtyard, correct?

Vos: That is correct. There has been no contract to design it.

Foley: Can the courtyard be pulled out toward the street to enlarge the space and bring the sense of the entry out further.

- Vos:** The further you get out, the higher it is. We also are constricted in the height of the court due to the garage.
- Sundberg:** I am disappointed about the lack of funding for the courtyard. It could be a powerful community space for the project. People on the street should be able to see in a little, but not a lot. The area of public and private domain shouldn't be too understated. I question the choice of vinyl siding. There has to be some sense of density in color or materials.
- Vos:** We are planning to use white vinyl on the upper floors and slate type stone tile at the base with a color band top of the 1st floor to accent the small balconies.
- Swift:** I suggest that you select trees for the street side of a much larger scale. Large trees would better conceal the upper building portions which you want to downplay as well as better connect to the nearby large trees of Memorial Way and the University campus. I think your building design solution fits well into the campus context of the surrounding area. However, it is absolutely critical that dollars be found for the courtyard. It doesn't make sense, when the courtyard is supposed to be the heart of the project, that it is not funded and thus not designed. The back end of the courtyard needs some sort of tree or planting to balance the pedestrian scale at the front.
- Sundberg:** I know we are suggesting ways to spend money you don't have, but what about putting big planters on top of the garage columns. It would minimize additional structure to support plantings.
- Swift:** I recommend that you do a real good job of getting a planter on top of a column and then get a real lovely tree to give the court space some scale.
- Sundberg:** A single tree in the court, along with the other proposed landscaping, will give the impression of a densely planted space. It is too good of an opportunity to pass up.
- Vos:** The potential is there, but the money isn't; and that is very frustrating to us as well.
- Hopper:** There is a terrific overstory of large trees which extend up 17th Ave. and side streets. The yards themselves don't tend to have large trees, but rather understory in the yard and overstory on the street. Pending the City Arborist's approval, large, fast-growing trees on the street with smaller scale plantings around the building will provide the overstory/understory balance that exists in the surrounding area.
- Wagoner:** The Commission could make a recommendation that large street trees be considered on 16th Ave. Does the entrance actually have a gate on it.
- Vos:** Yes, there will be a gate. The planters next to it, however, will only be about 1 foot high, so the idea is to create a boundary without a severe feeling of enclosure.
- Foley:** So the gate is not there for functional reasons.
- Vos:** That's right. The back gates will be lockable, but not the front one.
- Sundberg:** Are there any other color choices for the vinyl siding?
- Vos:** Vinyl siding only comes in a few different colors, so we are somewhat limited.

Action next page.

ACTION: The subcommittee recommends that the Commission approve the project as presented in schematic design. The subcommittee supports the development of a courtyard concept and urges funding to be found for courtyard

development. The subcommittee recommends that the street trees and alley trees be of a scale commensurate with the surrounding neighborhood.

082197.3 Project: **SEATTLE PUBLIC UTILITIES IRRIGATION PROGRAM**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Shelley Lawson, Seattle Public Utilities
 Time: 30 min. (N/C)

The Seattle Public Utilities has developed the Water Efficient Irrigation Program which offers free irrigation system assessments, free irrigation system audits, and financial incentives. The program is focusing on multifamily projects this year. Common problems of multifamily projects include; a lack of labor, poor irrigation system, mixed zones, broken heads/mis-aligned heads, poor turf placement and usage, low head drainage, and old controllers. There are several possible approaches to improving irrigation water efficiency through the design, build, and operation stages. Past improvements have focused on the operations side of water efficiency in the past, but are now trying to approach the design side as well. The following key design issues have an effect on water conservation:

- few codes exist for water conservation,
- DCLU director's rule basically requires 25% of a landscape to be "drought tolerant plants",
- landscapes are one of the last things in new buildings to be considered, and consequently, the first to be cut due to overall project costs,
- money is the bottom line and people don't consider the life cycle costs as apposed to initial costs.

The program recommends that landscape architects become Certified Irrigation Designers, and that irrigation/landscape specialists supervise every step of landscape and irrigation installation

Discussion

Swift: It is terrific that the City government is interested in this issue. The monetary incentive is the kind of approach that will have a good impact.

Sundberg: One problem is that a lot of design is done by contractors, not designers, who use a lower quality systems and materials to save on cost. I think that the 25% requirement should be changed to 50% drought tolerant plant material.

Foley: I think you have focused well on the requirements of turf and the need to limit the use of that and make sure its watered properly. What about some of the other plants that might have different irrigation requirements during establishment and may not need irrigation after that? Does your program encourage or acknowledge that?

Lawson: Yes, definitely. I do encourage people to reduce the use of water on shrubs and non-turf areas if it looks like the plants don't need supplemental irrigation. Perhaps coding that would help.

Sundberg: Separating the different planting zones more clearly might also help.

Swift: This issue is challenging because there are many site specific subtleties to consider. There are months out of the year that are so dry that even drought tolerant materials need some water.

- Foley:** Do you have communication with the Parks Department? There seems to be an attitude that the green lawns need to be maintained. There may be an opportunity for the Parks Department to reduce some of their maintenance requirements by choosing to water their lawns less.
- Lawson:** I have been working with the Parks since I began this project. We are trying to get them to use central control rather than individual water systems. It is a real challenge getting them to use different plant material, since people really enjoy the grass. I haven't tried to get them to change existing plant material, but I have tried to get them to change watering techniques. The next step could be looking at the plant material and evaluating where grass is needed versus other choices. The King County Parks Department has two irrigation specialists and has been very active in water conservation since the 1992 drought. The City Parks Department, however, does not have any irrigation specialists at this time.
- Foley:** The landscape architects' attitude is to use drought tolerant plantings with a temporary (drip) irrigation system. The irrigation is used during plant establishment and possibly during heavy drought situations only.
- Lawson:** Has that approached been working for your clients.
- Foley:** Yes, it has been working.
- Lawson:** Future development of the irrigation program might include standardizing the things we will pay for, such as rain shut off devices, temporary drip systems. We want to concentrate on easy ways for people to save water. If you have any ideas, let me know. Is there any type of training that we could offer the design community regarding irrigation issues?
- Foley:** Some manufacturers have training which you might be able to develop, emphasizing good irrigation design principles.
- Swift:** I think that monetary incentives for developers will be the most productive implementation method.
- Wagoner:** DCLU inspections might be another avenue for enforcing good irrigation design.
- Swift:** Perhaps access to nonprofit groups could happen through DHHS. Are there incentives for single family residences to use water conservation devices?
- Lawson:** Most people don't have home irrigation systems. We don't currently offer incentives for homeowners, although that is something to think about.
- Foley:** Do you consider reviewing systems, offering design analysis, while still in the plan stages?
- Lawson:** Yes, we are willing to look at plans.
- Wagoner:** DCLU might be a good place to distribute information.
- Lawson:** One challenge that I face is working with the whole Seattle area including the east side. DCLU is great for Seattle only. I also try to distribute information in Bellevue as well, since they have an active landscape code.
- Swift:** Information gives the designers a tool to make a case to clients for higher initial investments that pay off in the end.
- Wagoner:** Since the value of that system is usually the long-term owner, which in the cases of condominiums and multi-family are not the people that initially developed them. It might be important to develop a more informed buyer who knows about the

benefits of an efficient irrigation system and can ask appropriate questions when buying property.

COMMENTS: Briefing only, no action required. The Commission appreciates the City's efforts to address this issue.

082197.4

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Action Items

- A. MINUTES OF AUGUST 7, 1997 The subcommittee recommends that they be approved as amended.

Discussion Items

- B. PIKE STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT: The Commission received an afternoon briefing from Ethan Melone and Katherine Claeys.
- C. CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION - Internal Design Review Committee Meeting: Wagoner updated the Commission on the Convention Center Expansion Plan.
- D. NORDSTROM SIDEWALK TREATMENT: The Commission discussed the footprint selection process as defined in the materials received from Norstrom since their 8/7/97 presentation. The Commission recommends approval of the proposed selection process as presented in these materials.

082197.5

Project: **PIKE STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**, Phase 1
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Katherine Claeys, Seattle Transportation
 Ethan Melone, Office of Management and Planning
 Attendees: Beverly Barnett,
 Time: 1 hr. (N/C)

On June 11, 1997 a public workshop was held to get public input regarding street improvements on Pike St. between 1st and 7th Avenues. The Seattle Transportation Department sees an opportunity to move forward with the Pike Street Improvement Project's "Market Zone" streetscape improvements in the 4th quarter of 1997 and the 1st and 2nd quarters of 1998. The Office of Management and Planning supports this approach and is seeking input on implementation issues.

Pike St. was divided into 4 zones, Market, Entertainment/Retail, Convention, and Capitol, each with different physical characteristics and design needs. The whole project is conceived in terms of a couplet with Pine St. \$200,000 in funding have been approved and \$120,000 in CBD Lighting Program Funds are possibly accessible. Seattle Transportation desires to stretch the budget by containing design/engineering costs, (i.e. splicing into existing conduit for new lighting).

The initial stage of improvements will focus on the “Market Zone” between 1st and 3rd Avenues. The preferred scope of the plan will include widening the sidewalk on the north side from 1st to 2nd Ave., implementation of the Pine St. Lighting Program, and sidewalk “buffing” or replacement (with contributions from adjacent property owners). There are two options regarding the design process.

Option A: Engineering Services begins design development of the preferred scope

Option B: Seattle Transportation contracts with an urban designer for development of the concept/scope and ongoing design guidance.

Option B will have a higher cost associated with the use of a contracted urban designer. After design development occurs a public meeting or workshop will be held.

Discussion:

Swift: The reality of distinctly different zones was clear at the Convention Center Expansion Project meeting. Therefore, different treatment along Pike St. would be appropriate to express these different zones.

Claeys: With the current funding we want to concentrate on two blocks at the west end of the street where improvements are most needed and can be done with minimal expense. Major capitol improvements are not needed between 4th and 7th Avenues.

Wagoner: One observation I have made, after working with the Pine St. improvement projects, is that the driving force behind changing the lighting on Pine St. was the desire to have a consistent alignment and lighting style from 1st to 9th. The standard was set from 3rd and Pine as part of the transit project. The three globe fixture is also the standard for the Pioneer Square Historic District and for Pike Place Market. Therefore, if your “Market Zone” is from 1st to 3rd, the Market Historic District might want you to use their standard.

Claeys: The problem with using 3 globe lights is that supplemental lighting is limited to the single globe fixtures, because the 2 globe lights don’t look good with the 3 globe.

Sundberg: Hasn’t anyone designed a shield that fits over those globes to reflect more light onto the sidewalk?

Swift: The lighting lab has been working with Seattle regarding pedestrian lighting. They might be a valuable resource for you.

Foley: Are there corridors in the City that need to be developed with a certain character, and is there a plan for them that might help guide you efforts? Is the lighting different in designated street corridors? It seems like the City is trying to use an inefficient fixture that is difficult to integrate with others. A different approach might be to use a more effective light fixture that is completely different from the other historic corridors in downtown.

Claeys: I have found a map of the zones containing different lighting styles which might be useful in addressing that point of view.

Foley: It is a modest project with a modest budget and some really nice things have been proposed in the plans. There may be a larger issue in the context of the downtown region.

Claeys: I would like to do these improvements right the first time.

- Sundberg:** I think it is a difficult project to design in pieces with continuity issues from one end to the other. It requires looking at the larger scheme. I wish money was available to look at the whole street in a comprehensive way.
- Foley:** There is also the pedestrian/vehicle component to this issue. I am sure that Pike is a heavily traveled corridor.
- Claeys:** Yes. Pike St. has about double the vehicular traffic that Pine St. has.
- Melone:** Will we get a tangible amount of input out of having a small contract with an urban designer on board?
- Swift:** As an urban design problem, it's a real beauty that has a lot of interesting issues. So you should be able to get a lot for your money.
- Wagoner:** There will also be design money to do the anchoring piece at the Convention end of the street. After the "Market Zone" is finished, you will have key pieces at either end of the street finished which allows intermediate pieces at a smaller, more feasible scale to be completed in the future.
- Claeys:** Developing the project in phased pieces makes sense if the whole plan is designed and in place.
- Melone:** We would like to start the design development phase with more detailed scoping in October of this year and have the initial set of improvements completed in the spring of 1998.
- Swift:** I think that a more comprehensive plan for Pike St. should be developed which can be implemented in stages. I also suggest that the north/south relationship be considered as well as the east/west direction. Taking a look at the corridor from the Space Needle might help in making some of these decisions.
- Sundberg:** Doesn't the City zoning already have some of these east/west streets designated as view corridors or green streets?
- Wagoner:** Yes, there are view corridors and green streets.
- Sundberg:** So there is some definition in terms of an urban design plan.

COMMENTS: **Briefing only, no action required. The subcommittee appreciates the creative, thoughtful approach to the Pike St. improvements, and suggests that an urban designer be utilized as well as the Lighting Lab. The subcommittee also suggests that a comprehensive plan for Pike St. be developed for the phased implementation of improvements.**

082197.6 Project: **SIDEWALK AND RELATED STORM DRAINAGE SLI**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Kris Castleman, Office of Management and Planning
 Pete Lagerway, Seattle Transportation
 Neil Thibert, Seattle Public Utilities
 Time: 1 hr.

The staff of the Office of Management and Planning have developed a final report in response to the City Council's Sidewalk and Related Storm Drainage Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI #49). This project has been a collaborative, inter-departmental effort that has pulled in the

experience and expertise of staff from the following City departments and offices: Seattle Transportation, Seattle Public Utilities, Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Planning, Law, Executive services, Council Central Staff and OMP. Further review by other City staff and commissions is still needed and to date, this has been an internal staff work effort which has not included a public involvement process. The report is intended to provide the Council with a useful set of information and preliminary recommendations that will inform future discussions of potential sidewalk projects. The findings could also provide the basis for developing a new sidewalk construction program in Seattle, if funding is identified.

The report is intended to serve as a discussion tool for examining the policy choices, design options, and funding tradeoffs associated with new sidewalk construction. The report includes:

- a review of the history of sidewalk construction and funding in Seattle;
- a discussion of the current funding availability for new sidewalk construction, and current and planned projects;
- a review of the elements of the traditional sidewalk project and identified costs;
- design alternatives - including new potential lower-cost options - for new sidewalks along arterial and residential streets;
- an overlay of drainage assumptions to identify estimated total project costs for each sidewalk design alternative;
- an overview of potential funding sources and mechanisms and a discussion of the applicability of each to the design alternatives;
- a preliminary discussion of potential criteria to determine priorities for building new sidewalks;
- major policy issues and choices that will require further discussion by Council and by neighborhoods; and
- potential next steps.

Sidewalks usually include a storm drainage improvement requirement. Storm drainage systems can range in cost from \$2.45 million to \$3.3 million per mile, not including extra cost items. Sidewalks, not including the drainage improvements, are also very expensive to construct, ranging from \$500,000 to \$1.1 million per mile. Public funds have not traditionally been used to pay for sidewalk (and related storm drainage) projects. The City's current policy is consistent with this tradition. Many of Seattle's neighborhoods and neighborhood business districts that do not currently have sidewalks have explicitly stated that they want sidewalks. Many of the plans coming out of neighborhood planning are anticipated to include expectations for new sidewalks.

City staff has found that lower-cost design alternatives for sidewalk projects are available and that local site conditions can vary tremendously, ultimately deciding which design alternatives can be employed. The staff did not find any new funding sources for these projects, but different funding options do exist which require property owners, elected officials, and voters to make explicit choices and tradeoffs.

Discussion

Foley: Is there a way that costs could be phased in over years.

Castleman: We have thought about ten year payment plans and lien possibilities at the time of property sales.

Swift: There is a range of solutions regarding the hardness of the pedestrian walk. I wonder if the Pedestrian Board can be used as a way to test the public acceptance of these solutions. How are you going to test these solutions relative to public policy, prioritization, and funding.

Lagerway: The Pedestrian Board is there to advise the City; therefore its involvement is fairly open ended.

Castleman: Seattle Transportation is actually doing some laboratory tests of the lower cost curbs to assess their longevity and durability. We are in the process of acquiring some prototypes which the City will use in a couple of pilot projects. The pilot projects will be placed in various conditions on a trial basis.

Lagerway: We want to make this an option for communities to choose. We will find neighborhoods in which there is full cooperation and a common desire for the pilot improvements to be tried. If not everyone in a neighborhood wants the improvements, we will go to another area. We find that after people see an improvement and get used to it, then they start asking for it. We are taking a very soft approach in terms of public process and are not forcing these improvements on the residential streets. We are taking a more aggressive approach in the case of arterial streets, saying we want full curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. We are building four projects this fall, and looking at where all the tripping claims have been made against the City. It is cheaper for us to fix the sidewalks than to pay the claims.

Castleman: Councilmember McIver is interested in having a public workshop regarding these improvement options. We would like to have public input on what they want the improvements to achieve functionally as well as what they should look like.

COMMENTS: Briefing only, no action required. The Commission subcommittee appreciates the information presented and foresees a future role in the pilot area development.